Calendar No. 1229

82D CONGRESS, 2d Session } SENATE { REPORT No. 1298

AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION BY EXCHANGE OF CERTAIN PROPERTIES WITHIN DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL MONUMENT, CALIF.

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MARCH 13 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 25), 1952.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. O'MAHONEY, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 4515]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4515) to authorize the acquisition by exchange of certain properties within Death Valley National Monument, Calif., and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon and with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

H. R. 4515 would provide for an exchange of land between the Federal Government and the Borax Consolidated, Ltd., in order to give the company perpetual rights-of-way over certain lands for general utility purposes.

No expenditure of Federal funds necessary.

The Federal land, which consists of 20 acres, is valued at approximately $25. The privately owned land involved consists of two separate tracts, about 230 acres in size, valued at about $2,875. The land that the company offers the Federal Government can be utilized fully, one tract as part of a proposed airport and the other tract as one of the important scenic viewpoints in Death Valley.

All parties concerned have completely approved the exchange of land, and the Department of the Interior feels that it will be most beneficial to the Government and will have no adverse effect upon the monument.

An identical bill (S. 1730) was introduced in the Senate by Senator Knowland.

The favorable report of the Secretary of the Interior to the chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs is hereinbelow set forth in full and made a part of this report:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., October 8, 1951.

Hon. JOHN R. MURDOCK,
Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. MURDOCK: Your committee has requested a report on H. R. 4515, a bill to authorize the acquisition by exchange of certain properties within Death Valley National Monument, Calif., and for other purposes.

We recommend the enactment of this bill.

This proposed legislation would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to grant and convey to Borax Consolidated, Ltd., perpetual easements for rights-of-way within the Death Valley National Monument over not more than 20 acres of the monument land. These rights-of-way would be used by the grantee for general utility purposes and would be granted subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior may deem desirable. In return for the grant of such rights-of-way, the Secretary would be authorized to accept from Borax Consolidated, Ltd., approximately 230 acres of land situated within the present boundaries of the monument.

The land which will be acquired for the monument is divided into two parcels. One parcel, of 189 acres, is urgently needed for airport relocation and monument utility purposes. The other tract, of 40 acres, will establish Federal ownership over an important tract situated at Zabriskie Point, one of the important scenic viewpoints in Death Valley. We believe this prospective exchange is in the public interest as the value of the lands to be acquired for the monument is considerably greater than the value of the rights-of-way to be granted by the Federal Government. Such rights-of-way will have no adverse effect upon the monument. For these reasons, we consider the exchange to be advantageous to the United States.

This report has been submitted to the Bureau of the Budget and we have been advised that there is no objection to the submission of the report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

DALE E. DOTY,
Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

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